

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS

ARISE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE; OISTE?  
NEW ENGLAND STATE-AREA  
CONFERENCE OF THE NAACP; REV.  
TALBERT W. SWAN, II; NORMAN W.  
OLIVER, DARLENE ANDERSON,  
GUMERSINDO GOMEZ; FRANK BUNTIN;  
RAFAEL RODRIQUEZ; and DIANA NURSE,

Plaintiffs,

v.

CITY OF SPRINGFIELD and SPRINGFIELD  
ELECTION COMMISSION,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. 05-30080 MAP

**TRIAL AFFIDAVIT OF HENRY TWIGGS**

I, Henry Twiggs, hereby certify as follows:

1. I am a Springfield resident living at 78 Westminster Street in Ward 4. I have lived there since 1982 and have resided in Springfield since 1958. I am African American.
2. I have been active in the civil rights movement and in politics in Springfield my entire life. I am currently the Springfield Chairperson of the State Democratic Party and have been the Ward 4 Democratic Party Chairman since 1994.
3. I worked on John F. Kennedy's presidential election and on every city, state and federal election since. I have first hand knowledge of the electoral process in Springfield.
4. I have participated in numerous campaigns from organizing the campaigns to serving as campaign manager. I managed Mo Jones' campaign for City Council twice; I managed Ben Swan's campaign for Mayor and State Representative; I coordinated and managed Ray Jordan's campaigns for State Representative; I coordinated Talbert Swans' City Council campaign; I was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District Coordinator for Jesse Jackson's 1984 Presidential Campaign; and I was the Campaign Director for the Western, MA office for the Deval Patrick Campaign.

5. When I have campaigned with my African American candidates in predominantly white neighborhoods I have encountered a lack of support from white voters. In Ward 7 I can recall when knocking on doors, having the door slammed in my face by white voters. When I was handing out literature at a factory gate, I can recall white workers taking our flyers and throwing them in our face or on the ground.
6. The white wards of Springfield have not supported African American candidates. Whites have voted to defeat most African American candidates.
7. In about 1970, Henry Payne, a very popular African American ran for State Representative. He had been an all-star basketball player at Commerce High School and was very well known and well liked and respected throughout Springfield. He had great support in the African American community but was not able to get the support from the white community necessary for him to get elected. I was struck by how well liked he was in the white community when he was a star athlete, but how they would not vote for him when he ran for public office.
8. The times African American candidates got the support of white voters was when they were perceived to be Irish because of their names, and voters did not know they were of color. Rev. Ron Peters, a Black minister got elected to the School Committee because he did not have his picture on his campaign literature and many voters thought he was white.
9. The at-large system has promoted bullet voting where African Americans vote for the African American candidate and Latinos vote for the Latino candidate. I myself have at times recommended that people bullet vote in order to have a better chance of electing candidates of their choice. Sometimes you actually give up the power of your vote by voting for more than one candidate.
10. While Springfield does have some specific neighborhoods, I see no contradiction between having city council elections by district and maintaining neighborhood councils.
11. I have observed numerous problems on election day with white poll workers treating minority voters disrespectfully. The city has generally hired white poll workers who did not provide appropriate assistance to voters and discouraged African Americans and Latinos from voting. I have received numerous complaints from minority voters about how poorly they were treated when they attempted to vote. I have tried to work with city officials to bring in new poll workers who will treat voters respectfully.
12. One of the election problems in Springfield is the high number of voters who do not return the annual census forms, resulting in their being taken off the active voting list and put on the "Blue List" or inactive voting list. When people are on

the Blue List they are told by the poll workers that they have to present two forms of ID in order to vote. Many voters, especially Latino and African American voters, come to the polls without ID. If they are sent home they often do not come back to vote. I called for a meeting in 2005 to discuss this problem with Springfield election officials, but I do not believe the problems have been resolved. I was told by some of the new wardens that in the November 2006 election there were long lines because there were so many inactive voters. In fact, in Ward 4C there were more inactive voters than active voters.

13. African American and Latino voters often call me and write me to tell me that despite the fact that they vote in every election they are taken off the active voting list and have a hard time voting. I believe the annual census system keeps qualified voters of color from exercising their right to vote.
14. There is a history of discrimination in Springfield both in the attitude of many white people towards people of color and in such areas as housing, employment, education and police relations. I was a Legislative Aide to Rep. Ben Swan for three years and received many complaints from African Americans in Springfield about police brutality. I also have received complaints from people in my capacity as Ward 4 Democratic Party Chair.
15. Within the last month or so the Springfield School Department elevated many people to supervisory positions. It is my understanding that out of 70 to 80 appointments there has been not one African American male promoted and only two African American females promoted. I have been contacted by an African American male who has complained about this discriminatory promotion process.
16. Both within the School Department and in other city departments and agencies, there are few African Americans and Latinos in high-level strategic positions. When the few appointments of African Americans or Latinos have been made it has been because of community pressure.
17. The city of Springfield has a history of not giving city contracts to African American businesses. For instance, an African American company has repeatedly bid on the City's towing contract. Despite having the low bid they have not been awarded the contract. Just recently, the Control Board rejected a bid from the company. The general feeling in the African American community is that it doesn't matter how qualified you are, or how low your bid, the city will not award you the business contract.
18. I believe that in the 2005 election many voters did not come out to vote because there was not a serious contest for the Mayor's race. In addition, the City Council positions were downgraded by the Control Board and several people told me they would not be interested in running for City Council because it did not have any real power.

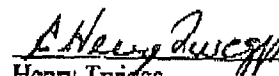
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FROM : HIGHLAND HOUSE

FAX NO. : 4137366677

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Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury this 2nd day of February 2007.

  
Henry Twigg

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that this document filed through the ECF system will be sent electronically to the registered participants as identified on the Notice of Electronic Filing (NEF) and paper copies will be sent to those indicated as non-registered participants on February 2, 2007.

/s/ Paul E. Nemser